

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 7413

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, ACOM, TU, US

SUBJ: APO NEGOTIATIONS

1. SUMMARY. IN THE EVENT OF A FAVORABLE HOUSE VOTE THIS WEEK, WE PROPOSE IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER TO REQUEST THE GOT TO RE-ESTABLISH APO PARCEL PRIVILEGES SO THAT MILITARY PERSONNEL MIGHT RECEIVE CHRISTMAS PACKAGES. THIS MESSAGE DESCRIBES BRIEFLY GOT OBJECTIONS TO APO AND SETS FORTH VARIOUS OPTIONS WHICH MIGHT HELP US OVERCOME THEM. EARLIEST WASHINGTON APPROVAL TO EXPLORE THESE OPTIONS WITH GOT IS REQUESTED. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PROBLEM. PERSUADING GOT AUTHORITIES TO ACCEPT ANY ARRANGEMENTS FOR APO PARCEL SERVICE WILL BE DIFFICULT. THEIR PRIMARY CONCERN IS PROBABLY POLITICAL. MANY FEAR THAT PERMITTING THE OPERATION OF A FOREIGN POSTAL SYSTEM IN TURKEY WILL BE POPULARLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRE-WORLD WAR I "CAPITULATIONS," AGAINST WHICH MOST TURKS CONTINUE TO HARBOR GREAT RESENTMENT. REINFORCING THIS "SOVEREIGNTY" ARGUMENT, IS THE FEAR ON THE PART OF CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES IN PARTICULAR THAT THE SYSTEM HAS BEEN USED TO CIRCUMVENT BANS ON THE EXPORTATION OF ANTIQUITIES AND THE BELIEF OF BOTH CUSTOMS AND POSTAL AUTHORITIES THAT THE APO CUTS INTO THEIR REVENUES. FOR THESE REASONS THE GOT HAS NEVER BEEN WILLING TO PROVIDE WRITTEN APPROVAL FOR OUR APO (WHICH HAS

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CONSEQUENTLY OPERATED FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES ON THE BASIS OF

AN ORAL AGREEMENT), HAS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS QUESTIONED ITS CONTINUATION, AND IN AT LEAST ONE INSTANCE (1967) FORMALLY ASKED THAT IT BE CLOSED.

3. FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS DESCRIBE FIVE OPTIONS IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE AND IN ORDER WE WOULD RAISE THEM WITH TURKS. (WE DO NOT AT THIS TIME RECOMMEND GOING BEYOND OPTIONS ONE AND TWO, HOWEVER.) ALL OF THESE OPTIONS ASSUME TURKS WILL WAIVE CUSTOMS DUTIES AND PURCHASE OF TURKISH POSTAGE. FINAL TWO PARAGRAPHS DISCUSS POSITIONS WE MIGHT TAKE SHOULD THEY REFUSE TO DO SO.

US OPTION NO. 1: RETURN TO STATUS QUO ANTE. WE RECOGNIZE THAT GOT WILL FIND THIS OPTION DISTASTEFUL AND WE HAVE LITTLE TO OFFER AS A SWEETENER. OPERERE SOME PROCEDURES WE COULD INSTITUTE WHICH MIGHT HELP ALLAY TURKISH SUSPICIONS OF THE APO, HOWEVER. THESE WOULD INCLUDE PLACING CUSTOMS DECLARATIONS ON ALL INCOMING PACKAGES JUST AS IF THEY HAD BEEN SENT VIA INTERNATIONAL

MAIL. IF SUCH DECLARATIONS WERE DETACHABLE (I.E., NOT GLUED ON THE PACKAGES AS IS OFTEN THE CASE), OUR OWN APO PERSONNEL COULD DETACH THEM AND GIVE THEM TO GOT CUSTOMS. BEYANNAME ITEMS WOULD THUS BE REGISTERED. (ONLY A FEW APO PARCELS WERE HANDLED IN THIS MANNER WHEN WE HAD PACKAGE PRIVILEGES ALTHOUGH WE ASSURED THE GOT THAT APO-IMPORTED ITEMS WERE DECLARED TO CUSTOMS AND LISTED ON BEYANNAMES.) WE WILL ALSO ACCEPT LIMITATION ON CONTENTS (TO EXCLUDE FOR EXAMPLE AUDIO EQUIPMENT AND MAJOR APPLIANCES). SIMILAR CONTROLS WOULD BE ESTABLISHED FOR OUTGOING PACKAGES. WE WOULD ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN SUPPORT FOR THIS OPTION FROM TURKISH GENERAL STAFF (TGS) WHO USED APO BEFORE EMBARGO FOR EXPEDITING SHIPMENT OF CERTAIN MAP ITEMS.

5. OPTION NO. 2: RETURN TO STATUS QUO ANTE BUT HAVE CUSTOMS OFFICIALS STATIONED AT APO'S OR MAIL TERMINALS TO CHECK INCOMING AND OUTGOING PARCELS. WE OFFERED SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT, WHICH WE UNDERSTAND IS THE MECHANISM NOW USED IN CONFIDENTIAL

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BELGIUM FOR APO MAIL, TO THE GOT IN 1967. EMBASSY RECORDS DO NOT INDICATE WHY IT WAS NOT IMPLEMENTED. IT WOULD HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OVER OTHER OPTIONS LISTED BELOW IN THAT WE WOULD ALWAYS RETAIN CONTROL OF THE PARCELS. DEPENDING UPON THE EXTENT OF INSPECTION BY CUSTOMS OFFICIALS, IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS OPTION WOULD ENTAIL SOME EXTRA MANHOURS AND EXPENSE IN REWRAPPING OPENED PACKAGES.

6. OPTION NO. 3: PACKAGES TRANSPORTED FROM US TO TURKEY AND DISTRIBUTED WITHIN TURKEY BY US FACILITIES BUT DELIVERED AFTER ARRIVAL IN TURKEY TO CUSTOMS INSPECTION FACILITY. HAVING APO MAIL PHYSICALLY DELIVERED TO CUSTOMS WAS ONE GOT DEMAND IN 1967. SUCH A SYSTEM WOULD RETAIN LOWER COST US DOMESTIC POSTAGE RATES, BUT WOULD HAVE THE DISADVANTAGE OF OUR LOSING CONTROL OF THE PARCELS WHILE THEY WERE UNDERGOING CUSTOMS INSPECTION. INSURING PACKAGES UNDER THIS AND FOURTH OPTION BELOW WOULD BE DIFFICULT.

7. OPTION NO. 4: MAIL TRANSPORTED IN BULK FROM THE UNITED STATES BY US MILITARY CARRIER AND THEN PLACED IN TURKISH POSTAL SYSTEM FOR CUSTOMS INSPECTION AND DELIVERY. THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE COMBINED WITH SOME FORM OF PAYMENT TO THE TURKISH PTT FOR THE SERVICES PERFORMED IN DELIVERING MAIL. (SEE ALSO PARA 10 BELOW.) IT WOULD HAVE THE PRIMARY ADVANTAGE OF KEEPING THE COST OF POSTAGE TO US SENDERS BELOWS INTERNATIONAL RATES AND PROVIDING RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION TO TURKEY. IN THIS OPTION AS IN ALL OTHERS, PARCELS WOULD HAVE TO CONTAIN CUSTOMS DECLARATION. OUTGOING PACKAGES IN THIS CASE WOULD BE MAILED AT LOCAL PTT OFFICES TO BE TRANSMITTED TO A CENTRAL APO INSTALLATION IN TURKEY WHERE THEY WOULD BE CONSOLIDATED FOR BULK DELIVERY TO THE U.S.

8. OPTION NO. 5: WE FEEL THAT ORDERING ITEMS AND RECEIVING PARCELS FROM THE US IS A MORE IMPORTANT MORALE FACTOR FOR PERSONNEL BASED IN TURKEY THAN SENDING ITEMS. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, WE MIGHT ACCEPT SOME APO FORMULA WHICH WOULD PERMIT TRANSMITTING PACKAGES FROM THE US VIA APO BUT WOULD REQUIRE PACKAGES FROM TURKEY TO BE HANDLED BY TURKISH PTT AND INTERNATIONAL MAIL. THIS WOULD BE A DEEP FALLBACK POSITION AND WOULD APPLY ONLY TO PACKAGES AND NOT TO LETTER MAIL.

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9. PAYMENT OF CUSTOMS. ABOVE OPTIONS ARE BASED ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT TURKS WILL ACCEPT PROVISION OF 1954 ORAL AGREEMENT THAT PARCELS ARE "SUBJECT TO THE SAME CERTIFICATION AND RIGHT OF TURK CUSTOMS INSPECTION APPLYING TO BX IMPORTS," I.E., NO DUTIES WOULD BE IMPOSED ON IMPORTED GOODS BUT THAT, IF APPROPRIATE THEY WOULD BE LISTED ON BEYANNAMES. SINCE GOT NO LONGER RECOGNIZES VALIDITY OF NATO/SOFA EXTENSION AGREEMENT PERMITTING OPERATION OF BX'S, HOWEVER, WE MUST CONSIDER THE REAL POSSIBILITY THAT THE GOT WILL INSIST ON TREATING FUTURE APO IMPORTS, IF PERMITTED AT ALL, AS "PERSONAL EFFECTS" THEREBY LIMITING DUTY FREE IMPORTATION TO A PERIOD IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ARRIVAL OF AN INDIVIDUAL. AFTER THIS SPECIFIED PERIOD, DUTY WOULD BE ASSESSED ON DUTIABLE "PERSONAL EFFECTS" BROUGHT IN THROUGH THE APO. IF TURKS ADAMENT ON THIS POINT, WE WOULD RECOMMEND PAYMENT OF DUTIES PENDING RENEGOTIATION OF DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS. WE UNDER-

STAND THAT BELGIUM NOW COLLECTS CUSTOMS DUTIES ON APO PACKAGES.

10. POSTAGE. USE OF AMERICAN POSTAGE ON APO MAIL SENT FROM TURKEY RAISES TWO POTENTIAL GOT OBJECTIONS: THE NEBULOUS SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE AND THE "LOSS OF REVENUE." BOTH OF THESE OBJECTIONS MIGHT

BE OVERCOME BY OUR OFFERING TO USE TURKISH POSTAGE ON OUTGOING PERSONAL MAIL. IF WE CONTINUED TO RETAIN ALL OTHER MECHANISMS OF THE APO SYSTEM AS THEY PREVIOUSLY EXISTED, USAGE OF TURKISH STAMPS WOULD INVOLVE A NET REVENUE GAIN FOR THE GOT WITHOUT COMMENSURATE EXPENSE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SERVICES. AS VARIATION, TURKISH PTT PERSONNEL MIGHT BE PHYSICALLY PRESENT IN APO'S (WITH CUSTOMS OFFICER) TO HANDLE THE STAMPING. ONE DETAIL WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE NEGOTIATED UNDER SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT IS WHETHER TURKISH POSTAGE WOULD HAVE TO BE PURCHASED AT RATES EQUIVALENT TO INTERNATIONAL POSTAGE FROM TURKEY TO THE US OR IF RATES EQUIVALENT TO LOWER DOMESTIC US POSTAGE AS NOW USED WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT, IN PRESSING THIS POSSIBILITY RE PACKAGES WE MIGHT RISK OUR RESIDUAL PRIVILEGE OF SENDING LETTER MAIL APO WITH US POSTAGE. WE WOULD MOST APPRECIATE KNOWING WHETHER THERE ARE PRECEDENTS FOR PAYING HOST COUNTRY POSTAGE AND WHAT, IF ANY, SUCH PAYMENTS CAN BE MADE UNDER EXISTING U.S. REGULATIONS.

11. ACTION REQUESTED: IMMEDIATE AUTHORITY TO BEGIN TALKS WITH TURKS AS DESCRIBED ABOVE. WE WOULD NOT MOVE TO OPTIONS 3 AND CONFIDENTIAL

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4, WHICH WOULD BE SERIOUS PROBLEMS, WITHOUT FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WITH WASHINGTON. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE RECEIVING AN UPDATED SUMMARY OF APO OPERATIONS IN OTHER NATO COUNTRIES. BERGUS

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